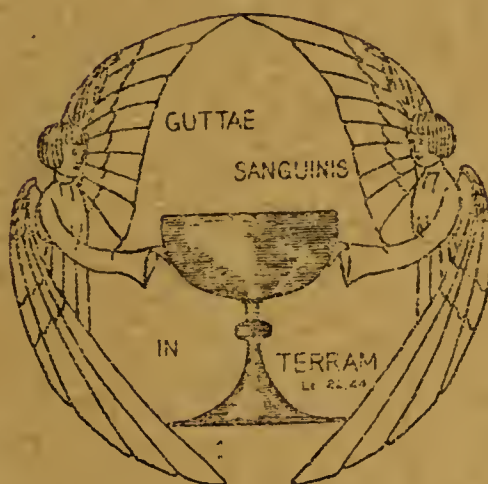




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THIS WEDNESDAY LENT BEGINS

This Wednesday, familiarly known as Ash Wednesday, marks the beginning of Lent. With the imposition of the ashes and the solemn words of the ritual: "Remember, O man, that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return," we are initiated into the sacred season of penance and prayer.

Lent offers manifold opportunities to make reparation for our own personal sins and the sins of others. There can be no finer Lenten practice than that of daily participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the daily reception of Holy Communion. The Way of the Cross is one of the most common of Lenten practices. Richly indulgenced, it offers a ready opportunity to gain merit for ourselves and for the suffering souls in Purgatory.

It is to be recommended that we perform at least one work of penance during this Holy Season. Many, in their first wave of enthusiasm, make numerous resolutions only to give them up in discouragement. Rather, make one good resolution and persevere in it throughout all of Lent: daily recitation of the rosary, refraining from attendance at shows, daily benediction.

THE PERSON OF GREATEST WORTH

Dr. Alexis Carrel, internationally known scientist, defines the person of greatest worth in the following words:

"It is not the great artist, with all respect to his artistic genius; not the great statesman, although he may display high political prowess; not even the great scientist, even though his research may have led to the compounding of an anti-toxin that can conquer pandemics. The person of greatest worth will be found in the person who has developed the greatest degree of moral beauty, the saint. The Roman Catholic Church, with its deep understanding of human psychology, recognizes this fact."

OUR LADY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

Daniel Lord

"....When the Christian world called upon Mary to defeat the enemy forces at Lepanto, it was merely repeating what it had always done whenever the enemies of God and man threatened justice and freedom.

"So today, when we feel our country is being threatened by foes who hate all the things that are Mary's and her Son's we think of Mary as Our Lady of National Defense. We want to cry out, "you fought with your sons against that earlier Red menace: please help us now against the totalitarian forces that strike at your son's Church and teachings.

"We have good reason for our prayer. For Mary is the queen of our democratic land. To Mary Immaculate the fathers of our Church in the United States dedicated our country merely a century ago. These United States were given to Mary in solemn consecration."

WHAT CAN WE DO AS CATHOLICS?

As Catholics, we can become champions of all that is fine and noble in life. We can, in our little way, show to a confused world what religion really means to us. Let us not be satisfied to be mere passive Catholics, looking from the outside in; but truly active Catholics working from within. As Catholics we have great responsibilities, but we know that in Christ, and with Christ, we can accomplish all things.

PRAYERS REQUESTED: For the repose of the souls of Mr. and Mrs. Effinger. For the sister of Rev. Henry Martin, seriously ill.

NEWS DIGEST

WASHINGTON, D.C. Collection of Catholic newspapers, magazines, and books which Catholic chaplains with the army and CCC could distribute in the reading and recreational buildings of camps throughout the country is suggested as a timely project for diocesan youth councils, in the current issue of Diocesan Directors' Bulletin, published by the Youth Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference here.

VATICAN CITY. Catholic participation in the National Socialist or Nazi movement is prohibited in a pastoral letter just issued by the Netherlands hierarchy and read in all churches.

The pastoral warns Catholics that absolution, Extreme Unction, and a Catholic burial will be refused to those Catholics giving appreciable support to the Nazi movement.

Vatican City. The first volume of the Catholic Japanese Encyclopedia, on which Tokio Catholic University has been working for several years, has been presented to the Holy Father by Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda. The first edition of 3000 has been sold out. The volume has 846 pages.

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA. Midnight Mass at Christmas in the open air on a coral island in the Pacific, with the blue starlit sky as a canopy, and the deep booming of the ocean on the beach as a mighty organ accompanying the choir-- this was the experience of 496 survivor victims of German raiders who arrived last week in Australia from the island of Emiau (Mandated territory of New Guinea). The celebrant of the Mass was the Rev. Denis Kelly, whose ship was sunk returning to England.